DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 332 359 EA 023 019

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TITLE Value Organization Linkages, Educational Restructuring, and Historical Reforms.
PUB DATE Apr 91
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 3-7, 1991).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrative Principles; Culture Conflict; Design Preferences; Educational Principles; Elementary Secondary Education; Ideology; *Organizational Development; *Organizational Objectives; Political Attitudes; School Restructuring; Social Differences; *Standards; Value Judgment; *Values

ABSTRACT

A century or more of reform in urban services, including schooling, has seen a competition over four core values: quality, equity, efficiency, and choice. These four are not always mutually compatible. Quality opposes equity and choice but is reinforced by efficiency, which is supported by equity. The choice value is incompatible with all the others. The order of quality, efficiency, and equity acts as a general sequence in policy-making while choice operates at every stage. The value-organization linkage means that a value underlying an educational policy produces a "bias" toward a particular type of organizational structure. Table 1 suggests different sets of linkages. Quality, efficiency and equity proponents prefer a centralized administration and a unitary decision making system. Choice proponents prefer fragmented decisionmaking and decentralized administration. Examples of core values that were promoted in school and other urban service reforms during the 19th century are provided. Adherence to one set of values required a distinct type of organization. Each value-organization linkage carries a set of costs that can be obscured by its proclaimed benefits. (39 references) (EJS)

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VALUE-ORGANIZATION LINKAGES, EDUCATIONAL RESTRUCTURING, AND HISTORICAL REFORMS

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Paper prepared for delivery at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, Division H, April 3-7, 1991.

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VALUE-ORGANIZATION LINKAGES, EDUCATIONAL RESTRUCTURING, AND HISTORICAL REFORMS

This paper is a reminder of how contemporary policy struggles echo those of the past because they are rooted in continuing conflicts among the few basic values over which democratic citizens contend. This is an important perspective for understanding the current restructuring and decentralizing debates in education (Chubb and Moe, 1990; Clune and Witte, 1990). Central to this perspective is the necessary connection of values with organizations that enhance them, that is, a value-organization linkage. We first define the few basic values and their organizational linkages, then note their role in the reforms of schooling and other urban services in the 19th century and later, and conclude with implications of this analysis for the current decentralization reforms.

The Political Context of Policy Values

This paper analyzes the concept of politics underlying policy values in order to derive a theory of value-organization linkage, before turning to an historical review. This paper is a preliminary statement of this theory, sketching its main elements without fleshing out details that will come in a later work.

The Nature of the "Political" in Policy Making

After two decades of effort by many scholars, the political quality of education is now accepted, and so needs little elaboration here. The tenets of the concept are clear. Political systems exist to deal with societal conflict by making decisions in the public sector about which values and resources will be recognized; these policies are all alike in providing society with an "authoritative allocation of values and resources," in Easton's seminal formulation (1965). Education system also share in these political system qualities because they, too, make significant decisions in the public sector about who will get what, when, and how (Wirt, and Kirst, 1989).

A distinctive quality of democratic systems is that they seek to satisfy the expressed values of many constituents who have a say in this matter. Having more players in the game, so to speak, changes the type of game from one where only a few players are on the field (Schattschneider, 1960). Even more, the society of a democracy is characterized by a great diversity of values along many dimensions of group differences. That diversity creates a special pressure on a democracy's policy-making system because the range of potential conflict that it faces is both broad and deep. Such diversity makes democracy's policy system a set of arenas, whatever the branch or level of governing for the resolution of conflict over values and resources . Educational policy does not escape this concept of an underlying, value-driven conflict.

The Value Core in Educational Policy Conflict

Amid the cut and thrust of policy making and the attendant clamor of many groups, the range of issues over which this conflict rages seems unlimited. Nevertheless, the set of values that generates such policy conflict is quite small. We are impressed by the pioneering work of Garms, Guthrie, and Pierce (1987) in pointing this out. They identified three basic values--efficiency, equity, quality--to which we now add a fourth--choice--and it is this value that has precipitated the current reform debate. Indeed, at different historical periods each of these four values has generated its own reform in educational policy. We need to look no further than the pre-1980 focus on equity and post-1980 turn toward quality and choice (see the essays in Boyd and Kerchner, 1988).

It is imperative that these four values be defined early, because they are not always as evident as they seem on their face. Relying on our earlier work (Mitchell, Marshall, and Wirt, 1989, chap. 6), we suggest definitions which the later historical examples will illustrate.

Quality. The "best" or "excellent" in the provision of any public service involves two stages which we can see in school policy. The drive for quality begins with creating some standard of performance--such as literacy--which if achieved enhances the life of the recipient of this service. Educational examples involve specifying some minimum standard of performance by staff or some level of achievement by students. Then, public resources are provided recipients to meet these standards across service units,

such as school districts. Examplary school policies are the familiar staff development, teaching resources, curriculum requirements, or testing and assessment. This value of quality becomes political, however, because of differing views of standards of quality that precipitate conflict over what the policy should be. Historically, educational reform has often been driven by this value and its conflict, for example, in the rise of the professionalism in pedagogy (Cremin, 1961) or in educational administration (Tyack, 1974; Tyack and Hansot, 1982).

Equity. A second value focuses upon a different standard, that of fairness in the redistribution of public resources for human needs that are unmet in the private sector. When these standards of fairness are applied to real situations, disparities are found between standards and needs. Public policy is then employed to use public resources to meet this disparity. Educational policy examples are found in compensatory or handicapped schooling.

In a much broader perspective, setting norms and identifying resource disparities underlie much conflict in world history; in democracies these factors generate a continuing policy conflict that arises over a set of pervasive questions that each generation must answer. Should government act on this disparity; if so, what level of government should act; if agreed here, then, what programs should be adopted; how should they be financed; and, finally, did they work (Wirt, 1981)? At some point when agreement can be reached on these questions, public resources are then employed in the form of policy programs designed to close the needs-resources gap.

Efficiency. A third value arises out of a mechanistic view of the ratio of work linked to energy used, but in social life this value is more complex. It is popularly seen as as goal--"Let's make this program efficient!" In reality, this value focuses more on means than ends, although this linkage is more a Deweyan "means with ends in view." That is, the debate is less over means than over goals about which citizens differ. In public policy, efficiency may take an economic form, that is, reducing costs while improving services, often expressed as desirable ratios, like cost-benefit; in education policy it is most familiar as the pupil-teacher ratio.

Efficiency may also take an accountability form, that is, those means by which authorities can hold their subordinates responsible for their actions. It is most familiar in the detailed requirements

for carrying out prescribed functions, for example, budget making. An important dimension of these procedures is that they ensure the realization of other values, such as honesty, effectiveness, or publicity. That is, by using such procedures officials are kept more honest, program success can be better estimated, and citizens can judge how well power is being used. This value's ideological support in our society derives largely from business influence. As we will see, its role in reforming local government and policy starting almost a century ago for the first time in our history to elevate efficiency as a prime value of public performance.

Choice. The possibility of alternative uses of resources, and the capacity to select among them, are the hallmarks of the value of choice. The contemporary interest in choice proposals, whether voucher proposal, site-based management or open school selection within and across districts, are only the most recent demonstrations of this value's importance. It is also seen in long-standing state mandates creating alternative curriculum tracks, or in state constitutions permitting parochial or other private school systems.

Underlying this value is the basic political principle of democracy, namely, popular sovereignty, which our Declaration of Independence resoundingly proclaimed as a goal. This principle is the legitimate source of political authority that empowers public action in any democracy. For it to be effective, citizens must have some choice, whether in their officials or programs, that is exercised through the political processes of elections, referenda, or pressure groups. The principle crops up in the current educational debate which arose as an expression of widespread citizen dissatisfaction with the current organization and outcomes of public schooling.

The Compatibility and Sequencing of Core Values

Distinctions among these four values should also include the realization that they are not always mutually compatible. In policy terms, some of the four values reinforce one another, while others are in opposition (Marshall, Mitchell, and Wirt, 1989, 146-50).

Value Compatibility

The search for quality in public policy opposes the values of equity and choice, at the same time being reinforced by efficiency methods. Thus, to meet students' educational needs, quality-based policies seek minimum standards and services that, to be effective, must be uniform. But equity-based policies seek services that are special, not standard. Quality policy supporters view the redistribution of resources required in equity policies as losses to their uniform standards, while equity supporters see their policies as necessities to met special needs. The arguments over desegregation and affirmative action are apposite to this quality-equity conflict.

Similarly, quality and choice polices are opposed because each leads to different notions of what good services are. Quality has been professionally defined for much of this century, of course, but for choice supporters that is the problem (Ravitch, 1983; Chubb and Moe, 1990). Recent efforts at empowering citizens to make school-site decisions and at encouraging other curricula and professional practices are designed to challenge those existing professional norms of quality. There is a broader perspective on this value conflict. A potential tension always exists in modern societies between the professional/technocratic and the popular views about how how services should be provided. For some time, this potential has been only quiescent, but a recent "revolt of the client" among numerous professions has made this conflict manifest (Wirt, 1981).

On the other hand, some of these values reinforce one another. The compatibility of quality and efficiency arises because efficiency, whether in accountability or economic forms, implement quality's standards of what is best. Rational formulas for the operation of services based on standards-- the core of state and central office regulations--are hallmarks of modern educational administration. It has been this integration of the two values that has been the target of critics urging greater choice in its place, preferring market-driven solutions to providing quality over the efficiency-driven alternative (Chubb and Moe, 1990, chap. 2).

Equity also has a dual relationship with other values, like that noted for quality. Equity-based programs oppose those of choice but reinforce those of efficiency. Choice-based policies provide alternative programs which governing units like school districts <u>may</u> choose, while those programs based on equity <u>must</u> be adopted.

Historically, the earlier fragmented and decentralized school system had maximized choice for parents. But that system worked best only for those with local power in defining quality programs and personnel, but not for those without it, namely, the poor, minorities, handicapped, and gifted. These groups were benefitted, however, by the professional model of education a century ago which redistributed schooling resources for such groups as immigrants and workers (Peterson, 1985). But a subsequent standardization of services, required for quality and efficiency, created new inequities. From this problem arose redistributive school programs of the last quarter-century seeking to redress these inequities by relying on centralized power at the state and federal levels. Subsequent statutes and courts at these levels enforced these equity goals and did so through mandates--the expression of efficiency.

Finally, the choice value stands curiously incompatible with all the others; we have noted this condition for quality and equity, but the same opposition continues for efficiency. Efficiency-based administration of standards contrasts with the variety of standards and administration that is inherent in choice policies. The contrast is between the decentralized diversity of the common schools before their reform over a century ago and the subsequent "one best system" of educational administration (Tyack, 1974). Here again we touch on the tension between the professional and the citizen that reflects the underlying rational versus participatory impulses of modern democracies (Mosher, 1982).

Sequencing of Values

Implicit in this analysis is a developmental model of how these values emerge in the sequence of policy making. The sequence is not as neat historically as set out below, but for analytical purposes we can understand the process as a policy sequence, later to be illuminated in the last century of educational reforms.

This sequence begins with the common-school era, noteworthy for its maximization of choice among the decentralized schooling services of mid=19th century. But while the condition was favored by many citizens and parents, others saw major problems in the system that could be remedied only by introducing new standards of quality in curriculum, administration, governance, and financing. Cremin's (1961) analysis of the "transformation" of schools had at its heart a concern by pedagogues to improve standards of quality.

Tyack and Hansot's (1982) study reflects a similar concern for other standards in administration. These new quality standards were to shape Americans' schooling for generations. It is when they became challenged that another reform was stimulated in waves of reform after the Nation at Risk condemnation of school quality.

The value of efficiency has followed the surge of quality in school goals because it is an effort to implement those goals. The effort involves tasks that the bureaucratic professional standards of efficiency know well. These tasks are: organizing personnel in heirarchies of skills, creating standards of compliance with goals by local units, and overseeing procedures to ensure that compliance. Equity concerns enter the sequence next because the distribution of these quality-efficiency services cannot be as even--or as sufficient--as some groups desire. That is, because differing needs of constituents of schools cannot be met fully, then accusations of inequity and unfairness necessarily follow. Over time, we can see this equity concern in different periods: vocational education early in this century; the "foundation" scheme of school finances in the 1920s; the post-1965 drive to meet the distinctive needs of students who were poor, minorities, handicapped, bi-lingual, or gifted; and school finance reforms in the 1970s and later.

In this sequence of values, there is a special element to choice because it operates at every stage. As noted, it was prevalent even before the major reforms a century ago. Witness the vast numbers of one-room school houses or local school boards within the big cities. When reform of these practices came, choice still remained, as manifest in:

--elected school boards and financial referenda to determine school quality (Wirt and Kirst, 1989, chaps. 6,8);

--the force of community values that challenges professional quality and efficiency standards , for example, the "zone of tolerance" within which professionals operate (Boyd, 1976) and which currently involves superintendents in constant conflict resolution (Wirt and Christovich, 1989);

--parental advisory councils at school sites attendant on ESEA and other national school laws.

The particular normative questions underlying the choice value in reforms today and yesterday remain the same. Those questions are: who should have the power to choose what service will be

provided, and on what services can they exercise this choice? At heart, these questions are only rewordings of the classic concerns of all democratic theory about the legitimate authority of popular sovereignty. In turn, that is one way of answering the classic questions of all political theory--who should have power and to what ends should it be used?

Enmeshed in this democratic concern for choice are other values. Quality--who will define the standards of performance when services are provided? Efficiency--how will these standards be be made effective? Equity--who will benefit from these services? While we separate these values for analytical purposes, it is clear that they are interconnected with reciprocating consequences in the policy world. The analytical approach of this section on definition and sequence does not presume any neatness to the four values. But it does enable us to clarify what the policy conflict is about, to identify the contestants and their goals, and to suggest the larger theme of professional-participatory tension inherent in democracy. We next consider how these values are satisfied by creating distinctive structures of services, that is, how do the values get organized in reality?

The Linkage of Value to Organization

How people organize in order to achieve particular values is itself a political question that becomes a policy matter. Agreements that service decisions will be made at the top or bottom of an organization necessarily incorporates different values. In short, where you stand on organizational questions depends on what you want. This section develops that thesis to explain further the value-organization linkage.

Decades ago, political scientists E.E. Schattschneider's aphorism has guided much thinking about the purpose of organization:

> All forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because <u>organization is the mobilization of bias.</u> Some issues are organized into politics while others are organized out (1960, 71; italics added).

In this perspective, the way that education or other public services is organized is not value-free. That is because organization reflects a "bias" about conflict over issues, and such bias is value based. Two further points follow from these premises. Organizations that are shaped by values drive conflict with other values over services, and different values are best mobilized and served by different forms of organizing those services. In short, value is linked to a compatible form of organizing the services that serve that value.

In this value-organization linkage, certain dichotomous questions arise that are settled one way or the other. Is the decision making about a given value to be fragmented into multiple organizations or to be unified in one? Is the administration of the policy (i.e., setting, providing, and monitoring service norms) to be centralized or decentralized? Is the selection and rewarding of service personnel to proceed by merit (i.e., standardization of job norms and subsequent personnel selection by merit) or by favoritism (i.e., selection on grounds of political party, gender, ethnicity, religion, region)?

The proposition here is that a particular value underlying an educational policy necessarily produces a "bias" toward adopting a particular organizational answer to questions about service provision. We will term this the value-organization linkage. We advance the theoretical perspective that each of these four values reflects particular biases for organizations linked to range of administrative behaviors, that constitute different sets of linkages. Table 1 suggests these sets elaborated below.

(Table 1 about here)

1. Because agreement exists on the need for one set of policies embodying their goals, quality proponents prefer a unitary decisional system that can impose these goals; this approach also emphasizes a preference for centralization at the citywide or statewide level rather than by sub-communities. Consequently, these proponents prefer a centralized administration of quality programs closely tied to the profession, symbolized in the central office or state education agency. Finally, quality proponents favor merit selection of personnel, with merit defined by the profession, encapsulated in state law, and guided centripetally by schools of education or professional associations. Such an approach links the quality values of centralized program decisions to practice in the school district.

2. Similarly, efficiency proponents prefer a value-organization linkage that parallels that for quality. That is because quality and efficiency are conceptually linked, as earlier noted, and because the need for effective implementation of quality is an organizational imperative for matters of efficiency. Consequently, efficiency proponents prefer: unitary decision making so that energies will not be dissipated among multiple decision centers; centralized implementation so that control and oversight of implementation can be maximized; and merit selection of personnel, namely, those imbued with quality and efficiency norms instilled through professional training.

3. The ideas expressed in the two value-linkages sketched above have captured political acceptance by a majority over most of a century. But the need of minorities to acquire their share of educational resources in other policies has driven equity proponents to a value-organizational linkage that, curiously, is similar to the other two values. Thus, they prefer unitary decision making so that their special notions of quality could be served by the state--later federal--government's resources when local power holders in school or community would not provide them. Also, centralized administration of equity-based programs is preferred because it provides better oversight in of altering the distribution of local school resources. However, while the merit principle is important to these proponents (they, too, want professionally qualified teachers and administrators), there is another consideration of personnel which causes them to differ from the other two linkages. This is the belief by some that having "their" people in charge of educating "their" students has a value for children that merit selection alone cannot serve. Under some conditions, favoritism to meet special needs can arise.

4. Because placing power in hands of those directly affected by it can empower many small groups to pursue their own and often divergent policies, choice proponents prefer fragmented decision making, decentralized administration, and personnel selected locally by favoritism. Each of these organizational options maximizes the opportunity for local values to be realized. Thus, decisional fragmentation creates opportunities for the locals' views to become policy; decentralized administration ensures local implementation of that policy; and selecting personnel who fit local value

configurations ensures that policy values will be transmitted within the school.

What evidence in experience exists to test this theory? It is to the historical evidence of this theory of value-organization linkage as manifest in school and other urban services that we next turn. We begin with schooling.

Value Priorities in School Reforms of the Nineteenth Century

During the 19th century, the dual transformations of education--the common schools and a subsequent professionalism--have been fully chronicled elsewhere. But we wish to focus upon the theory that certain core values were being promoted in these movements. The evidence provided below is only an introduction to the analysis to be developed more fully elsewhere. But it clearly suggests that the value-organizational thesis provides some understanding of these major historical movements.

The Common School Reform

Horace Mann's concept of the "common school" is our starting point, because its "common" element applied to the values that the school taught in the curriculum. But control was vested in legislatures and school boards, and not in the professionals, as in the next era. In the vision of Mann and other crusaders, "the common school was to be free, financed, by local and state government, controlled by lay boards of education, mixing all social groups under one roof, and offering education of such quality that no parent would desire private schooling" (Tyack and Hansot, 1982, 30). The reform's success was not immediate, especially not in the South. Nevertheless, "By 1860...a majority of the states had established public school systems, and a good half of the nation's children were getting some formal education" (Cremin, 1961, 9-10).

In that century, outside the big cities (where most recent analysts have focused), schools were "rural, chiefly unbureaucratic in structure, exhibiting only rudimentary professionalism, and dependent on the actions of hundreds of thousands of lay promoters and school trustees" (Tyack and Hansot, 1982, 17). Americans were still mostly rural and spread out, so that school enrollments were larger in the country than in the cities, and so one-room school

houses dominated their organization. State involvement was

minimal; their education agencies, with a median size of only two persons, had little power to compel change in such a decentralized system (18).

In the big cities after the Civil War, though, the common schools had to deal suddenly with large numbers. In the process, efficiency was needed to serve the ends of quality in schooling. As urged by the distinguished pedagogue, William T. Harris, the answer to numbers:

> was the graded school, organized by years and quarter-years of work, with pupils moving through on the basis of regular and frequent examinations. [He] sought constantly to improve the economy and efficiency. He devoted himself to attendance reports, to textbooks, to the collection of school statistics, to the standardization of pedagogical terminology, to the lighting, heating, and ventilation of school buildings, to teachers salary schedules, and to the continuing supervision of instruction...[F]or in the completely evolved system would lie the finest expression of the new urban civilization (Cremin, 1961, 19).

No clearer statement of this value orientation of quality and efficiency can be found than in Cremin's characterization of this pedagogical leader--a foreshadowing of the professionalism to come later. "His emphasis is on order rather than freedom, on prescription rather than election, on the regularity, science, and industry that 'preserve and save our civil order' (20)." The spread of such ideas came about, not through law, but through exhortation spread through reformer networks linked to the private sectors of church, volunteer groups, philanthropists, and teachers (chapter 2). This combination of quality and efficiency, and the later equity orientation of vocational education, was centralized informally around a core of ideas. These were dispersed through boundary-spanning interest groups (e.g., Country Life Commission, National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education) and through ideologues--very often women--who spread the word like missionaries.

The missionary reference is apposite because these secular reformers shared a common religion in Protestantism, a common Anglo-Saxon ethnicity, and a common mission to promote civic virtue. This was "an aristocracy of character" that "relied heavily

on the conscious-raising and institution-building activities of voluntary associations...in regional and national networks...akin to the religious movement that spread Protestant churches across a far-flung rural nation" (Tyack and Hansot,1982, 5-6). As a result, decision making was transformed to advance the value of quality which, while retaining a decentralized administration, ensured the continuation of the value of choice by the many lay-controlled, elected, representative boards.

The Professionalism Reform

But all of this was to be transformed organizationally as well as ideologically with new "progressive" ideas about pedagogy (Cremin, 1961). These changes involved:

> [A] new social division of labor [that] transformed the character of decision making in education as in many other domains, substituting administrative discretion for governance by elected lay representation....[These reformers] gained, as did leaders in other occupations, authority to define what was normal and desirable....[T]hey shaped the preferred policies into a standard template of reform which they applied to state after state, district after district, in their school surveys and legislative proposals....They successfully changed the structures of decision making and sought to turn political issues into matters for administrative decision, confident that the schools could rise 'above politics'" (6-7).

Such reforms were designed to meet new problems by developing a growing awareness of the need to change the amateur nature of teaching and administration, both of which were overtly partisan at that time. Despite consolidation, rural school boards had increased in size (numbering 50, 70, over 100). With this had come new social and economic costs: corruption in appointment of teachers and administrators, higher payments for construction because of kickbacks, and a favoritism that dominated all decisions (Cremin, 1961, 21). In the big cities, school people worked under numerous neighborhood (or precinct) school boards, machines controlled all city workers, unions were on the rise, and there was an unprecedented expansion in city size, involving more students to educate.

Toward the end of this century, then, two realizations slowly grew among educational reformers. The first was the sense that they faced a common--indeed national--set of educational problems to which a common set of scientific and management techniques needed to be applied. The second was that public authority could incorporate these new ideas only through creating heirarchical organizations and bureaucratic regulations. To telescope a huge transformation, there then began

> the bureaucratization of schools, an early argument for scientifically trained superintendents, pioneer efforts of leaders in the National Education Association to set professional standards and arbitrate conflicts, and attempts by Republican politicians to use the federal and state governments to act in new ways to support and control schooling.
>
> Big-city school superintendents, like police departments, were among the first examples of heirarchically organized public bureaucracies in the United States....Boston and New York were leaders in creating complex school systems with distinct roles and rules, standardized curriculum and procedures, and an administrative ideology of efficiency, rationality, precision, continuity, and impartiality (Tyack and Hansot, 1982, 95).

Creation of common schools by visionary appeals now gave way to a new organization of education. This was a heirarchy of professionally-driven schools resting on coercion by laws that were centered on the state and supplemented by vocational programs funded by federal law. The latter was a first sign of equity in school policy, as this particular reform met the special needs for vocational training that had emerged in farms and homes. Most of these changes were highly partisan. There is considerable irony today in understanding that around 1900 a Republican party was leading this centralization drive against a Democratic party that attacked it. Compulsory education fostered by Republican governors, as Tyack and Hansot point out (101-03), was pivotal to this new professionalism (Cremin, 1961, 127). With this compulsion came the need for more laws to supervise, monitor, and finance school attendance. New forms of school organization emerged that required new specialists and their coordination in program implementation at district and school-site levels. In the process, school leaders

became careerists with their expertise backed by specialized training to enter and continue in the profession.

The final result was that decision making escalated from a fragmented, decentralized system to a pyramid of power resting upon specialized managers and teachers. All of these shared the premise that they should make educational decisions because they knew what was good quality in practice. In the pursuit of schooling values that the professions set for practitioners, efficiency became a cult (Callahan, 1962). Organizationally, reformers shared a view that there was "one best system" (Tyack, 1974) for making decisions--and they knew what it was.

In such decisional arenas controversy was reduced because agreed canons of the profession removed favoritism in practice with all its inherent potential for conflict; they saw this as a form of "depoliticization." But as Tyack and Hansot point out--although it was not until recent decades that it was realized widely--"This was, of course, not depoliticization; it was another form of politics...that rested not on representativeness or participation but on expertise" (106-08). All this reform activity shared much with the emerging corporate form of decision making (Part III).

Numerous groups were behind this reform. Like the common school reform, this one had much public support, at least in the big cities. Peterson and his colleagues (1985) build a strong historical case that trade unions, immigrants, and others had strong influence in this reform Support also came from other circles, namely, national networks of influentials in universities and foundations and among key superintendents (Tyack and Hansot, 1982,129). In universities, these new experts in the "science" of education (see throughout Cremin, 1961) became more influential than the academic specialists (Tyack and Hansot, 1982, 138). Superintendents formed an "old boy" network (although a few noteworthy women were involved) for spreading approved professional norms and for making hiring recommendations; here, the NEA took on new professional influence.

It is indicative of this influence that the NEA's 1969 review of developments in the states since 1900 were testimonials to the growth and appreciation of the quality and efficient education that it had helped produce (Fuller and Pearson, 1969). Some contributors to that volume provide quite revealing indicators of this growth in

state centralization and the state-profession fusing. Thus, comparing 1900 with 1966 or 1967, they found far more:

--state school boards in existence (28 vs. 48),
--state boards appointed rather than elected (3 vs. 24),
--states enforcing degree requirements for first certification of teachers, both elementary (0 vs. 47) and secondary (2 vs. 52),
--state funding of local school costs (20.3% vs. 39.9%). (Fuller and Pearson, 1969, 71, 94, 393, 180).

This sketch of a mighty engine of change in American education serves to illustrate how the value of quality necessarily was linked to centralized organizations in order to do an efficient job. In the process, any choice in such a centralized system remained only in the form of elected district boards and financial referenda (found in about half the states). But increasingly these boards were carrying out state-imposed mandates, and there is an inherent conflict between choice and mandates with their quality-efficiency values. Further elaboration of this centralization need not be developed here, but clearly recent decades have witnessed a great expansion in this centralization with ever more mandates, including those from Washington.

Equity concerns also emerged in the professionalism reform after the turn of the century in the vocational education movement (Swanson, 1969). A reaction to a new industrialism, to fears of German and Russian economic growth and to changing factors in the labor market--vocational education was taken up eagerly by the states, and later, by Washington. By 1915, 23 states offered farm education in over 500 farm high schools. By 1911, 44 states were offering home economics, and commercial education was also on the rise. By 1912, five states had set up state systems of voc-ed, and more joined later. Washington reinforced the movement with the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917, plus another nine major laws prior to 1964. Federal focus on farm, home, industrial, and commercial education paralleled the efforts of the state by providing funds on a matching basis and by encouraging state planning and discretion.

Note that these new adaptations in education, while administered locally, arose from state reform, and its funding and major policy thrusts have come from a centralized system. Equity in this service was hardly possible among a profusion of local districts

lacking funding and expertise to meet new student needs in the world of work. But a centralized system--at state and federal level--could and did.

Centralizing Reforms in Other Urban Services of the 19th Century

Other municipal services parallelled this organizational centralization to achieve quality and efficiency in schooling. That development is expanded more fully in another paper in this convention (Wirt, 1991). But a briefer account here will demonstrate that these were tendencies of a new, widespread, American approach to servicing the needs of urban citizens.

The Pressures for Urban Reform

These municipal developments came out of the political crusade of the Progressives around 1900. With support of emerging middle classes, university scholars, and business corporations, this movement sought to restructure local governance away from control by the party machine toward an alternative way of organizing urban services. The machine could integrate very effectively the interests of its components: party organization, businesses, and the new immigrants. Each component in this triad gave and received something from the others in a symbiotic interaction of incentives (Jones, 1983, 127-31).

But increasingly, those interests were not those of new groups on the urban scene. The target of the latter was the control of the political party that then existed in every element of city life, both public and private. It was not democracy that was at fault, the Progressives charged, but the party leaders who were abusing their political power in a carnival of political and program corruption involving every aspect of local governance and public services. Consequently, the party was attacked, hip and thigh, by a series of state laws and constitutional changes which removed the local political party as a meaningful agent of local life. The secret ballot and later the nonpartisan ballot, the direct primary for nominations, at-large elections for city councils, council-manager or strong mayor structures, merit selection for public office, auditing controls, planning agencies--each sliced away some pillar of the machine (Fairlie, 1908; Munro, 1916).

Reform Principles and Centralization

The emotional, almost messianic, appeals of the Progressives against not democracy but the evils of democracy are hard to grasp in a modern era where such appeals are automatically suspect. But this was truly a moral crusade (Tyack and Hansot, 1982, 44; on such movements, see Gusfield, 1974). But it was also underlain by practical strategies for creating change and by rational substitutes for the old ways of doing business. It became, then, in a felicitous phrase, the "politics of efficiency" (Schiesel, 1977), which integrated impulses (sometimes conflicting) in the reformers' proposals. This efficiency was pursued with the aim of achieving quality (i.e., improving the standards of public services for citizens) and equity (i.e., ensuring that all citizens, not just those favored by party or ethnicity, received those services fully and fairly).

The reform proposals can be only summarized here. The reformers welcomed them "because the implementation of such proposals ultimately meant an increase in their influence over subordinate employees and the centralization of authority within their respective departments and offices" (4; emphasis added). This organizational preference generated a new idea about local governing, to be carried out not by political parties but by responsible executives operating within local administration. Securing such meritorious people would attract others like them and thereby result in more efficient service implementation. This reform was advanced as the antithesis of the spoils system's rampant incompetency. But these new executives needed controls in order to do the job properly, it was argued, and so a centralization of authority in their hands was crucial. So also was the creation of "nonpolitical" bureaucrats at every level, committed to the principle of the rationalization of improved public services. For example, a strong mayor "permitted greater coordination of departmental functions, metropolitan planning, and more public exposure for administrative authorities" (87).

Given these proposals, others clearly followed, all to the end of centralizing authority in the name of using efficiency to improve quality. Thus, new boards of finance would deal with taxation and expenditures by integrating them (unheard of at that time), which also restricted the particularistic and fragmented impulses of any elected council. Further, detailed planning and its effective oversight required a research capacity to find out what was going on

so that citizens and officials could know and judge effectiveness. Consequently, new research bureaus and scholarly analyses appeared to examine what was working well at home as well as elsewhere (see urban examples throughout the two-volumes of the leading scholar, Munro, 1923). Also, because business procedures were venerated, there was a widespread introduction of auditing controls.

However, bureaucratization of services in the name of quality and efficiency could lead to a parochialism within each agency that would be hard to coordinate in a rationally planned administration. To deal with this problem, a new reform idea emerged--the city manager (Toulmin, 1916). It was such a success that today it exists in about two-thirds of all American municipalities (except the very largest). This sweeping success, and that found in gutting local party government, have dramatically shaped urban policy making down to our own time. The them has been constant: a search for the efficient and rational in achieving quality in citizens' service needs.

Of course, this reform struggle was more than just a clash of principles of governing. It was also in part a class and ethnic contest (Hays, 1963). As an extensive literature now reveals (reviewed in Judd, 1988, 106-09), business leaders dominated the reform everywhere, just as the machine, trade unions, and socialists opposed it everywhere. The Anglo-Saxon nature of the reformers, contrasted with the Irishness and European natures of the opponents, suggest also that an ethnic rivalry was at work.

But it was also a struggle over something even more basic, a contest between two notions of how service policy should be made.

> One system, rooted in the relatively compact physical structure of the central city, involved extensive participation of disparate groups in local public affairs through the ward representation of partisan government. The other, growing out of the integrative economic and political activity of cosmopolitan business and professional groups committed to city-wide programs of efficiency and economical management, meant a gradual centralization of government in which decisions would flow from fewer and narrower centers outward toward the rest of the body politic (Scheisel, 1977, 45; emphasis added).

These briefly sketched developments testify to a drive paralleling that in education for efficiency and quality through creating an organization type that required centralization of service provision. These municipal reforms, like those in education, were aimed at improving the quality of public services and its personnel through a centralized system of decision making centered on the value of efficiency. Once triumphant, the reformed structure could yield very little to the choice-driven concerns that reflected local preference and favoritism for special groups and neighborhoods. That victory of the reformers purposefully frustrated the value of choice.

Recent Decentralization Efforts

However, the struggle to achieve choice did not die away. For decades, this centrifugal force of the old value of local control has sought to modify state and professional requirements to meet local preferences. Professionalism has always had to adapt its norms somewhat to the participatory thrust of a democratic nation that elects local school boards and city councils. Indeed, professionals themselves have long learned how to connect their professional norms to the local system's values (Peshkin, 1979), and how to find that "zone of tolerance" within which the community permits free play for the professional (Boyd, 1976). Moreover, federal law came to be a mutually adaptive process as national goals adjusted to local autonomy (Berman and McLaughlin, 1975; McLaughlin, 1976), intergovernmental networks defended their respective programs (Wright, 1982), and in time federal goals were realized more than popularly believed (Lemann, 1991; Peterson, Rabe, and Wong, 1986).

Organized movement for choice appeared in several streams after 1960, when citizen criticism of professionals began and then swelled in education (Wirt and Kirst, 1989, chap. 1). and other professions (Wirt, 1981). One non-educational example was the 1960s War on Poverty. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 created neighborhood community action agencies (CAAs), composed of local government, private groups, and "maximum feasible participation" of poor residents (Jones, 1983, 336-38). CAAs sought to inject federal funds directly into urban neighborhoods to meet local needs that urban service bureaucracies were not satisfying. These agencies were aimed at achieving an equity of power for the urban poor, even though all around was evidence that such equity as did exist had come through the centralization of federal law.

The results were not what was anticipated (Lemann, 1991). There developed instead a diverse pattern of representation (the poor were poorly represented), program activities (including some corruption), personnel quality (favoritism in appointments prevailed), and control (Chicago's government controlled its agency but Los Angeles' did not) (Greenstone and Peterson, 1976). City hall's reactions to this program were very negative, leading Congress later to require that mayors and bureaucracies would have a direct role in these programs. Some CAAs turned to social protest, and in the Nixon administration the federal agency was dismantled and its funding ended; in 1981, President Reagan discontinued the last vestige of this effort at neighborhood governance. One consequence, however, was that this law of the 1960s politically socialized a new cadre of minorities to the operations of urban government in the 1970s and later. They would appear as the new black and Hispanic mayors, councillors, and administrators of services in large cities (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb, 1984).

This particular effort to implement choice does demonstrate some qualities of the earlier, decentralized, common-school system.Ministering to the needs of the urban poor was highly fragmented; many personnel were poorly trained in running programs but nevertheless favoritism in appointment was widespread; and the quality of the services they rendered was never regarded as high, no matter how legitimized they might be by local control. The whole program could be criticized for being politically naive. It failed to incorporate existing power structures, was niggardly in the amount of federal funding applied to a scabrous wound of pitiful urban services, and lacked any sense of goals around which others could rally. In these regards, though, much the same criticisms were made of the earlier common school system. That similarity arises because these are conditions inherent in the value-organizational linkage that choice creates in providing public service.

Implications for Current School Reform

This paper has suggested that a century or more of reform in urban services, including schooling, has been a competition over the priority to be given to certain core values Reform has dealt with the replacing of the core value of choice--found in an earlier America of fragmented, decentralized local control--with the values of quality, efficiency, and equity that complement a new rationalism in policy making. That contest was not settled finally at any point,

to judge from the recurring efforts to reintroduce choice and local control. The Economic Opportunity Act was one example, and one could also add the New York school decentralization of the 1970s. The struggle is certainly manifest in the contemporary debate over choice which advances policies about student placement and site-based management.

The respective arguments about the utility of such reforms aside, it is important to understand continuing elements of this struggle over core values. Our earlier analysis made some points that we need to re-emphasize now. First and central to this paper is the proposition that adherence to one set of values requires a distinctive kind of organization to achieve it, but another kind for another value. As illustrated here, the realization of quality, efficiency, and equity required creating centralized institutions, whether at the level of city, state, or federal governments. The historical record is replete with evidence that such values have been realized in this fashion; we have suggested some of that evidence, to be developed more fully elsewhere (Wirt, 1991). However, the value of choice requires a different organization to realize it, namely, a structural decentralization into the many, fragmented, locally controlled units of policy making that had characterized our country's first century of urban policy.

Second, while not demonstrated here, it is implicit that each value-organization linkage carries a set of costs that are often obscured by its proclaimed benefits. Centralized decision making in pursuit of quality, efficiency, or equity requires the creation and operation of a large-scale bureaucracy. The cost of this condition is evident in the emphatic criticism of bureaucracy found in earlier challenges to professional education (fully reviewed in Ravitch, 1983), as well as in the current site-based management and other choice proposals (Chubb and Moe, 1990). Another cost is the weakening of the premise of democratic government that citizens should and can have a say in how power is used that affects them, as clearly all policy does. Even supporters of bureaucracy realize this contradiction, and seek ways to make congruent both democracy and centralized, professionalized organization for the provision of public services (the best analysis is Mosher, 1982).

On the other hand, the costs of decentralized organization that serves the value of choice are also evident in that historical record against which the Progressives had rebelled. Fragmentation of

decision making, favoritism, inequitable distribution of public services, and the denial of the possibility of a rational way of ordering urban life--all are seen in the earlier record. That record is highly suggestive of what might again occur if decentralization occurred with only minimal external constraints. Indeed, that earlier record serves as a checklist of what to look for in current site-based management proposals that represent social costs. These are: service fragmentation with attendant inequity, favoritism in dispensing policy rewards, and ignoring standards of fairness and quality that are set in our national policy system.

We are not prisoners of history, however, and today's conditions may have changed from those of the past. For example, citizens seeking today to return to the older system (with modifications, to be sure) may be different in ways that can reduce the costs of the earlier decentralized system. But it is as yet unclear how this value-organization linkage of choice can overcome the problems of inequity in providing services to. Or how much is lost in the trade-off of choice proposals that legitimize local schooling by encouraging participation in its decision making, versus the weakening of the quality and equity of schooling. Nor is there clear evidence that decentralization schemes improve the most important service of schools--improving student achievement.

History does not make us all cookies stamped out of some machine. But it does have its uses. Not least of these is alerting us to what might happen in the ongoing competition over values and interests that underlies all politics, including that of schools.

Table 1
Types of Value-Organization Linkages

Organization Preference	Value Types: Quality	Efficiency	Equity	Choice
Administration:				
Centralized	X	X	X	
Decentralized				X
Decision Making:				
Unitary	X	X	X	
Fragmented				X
Personnel Selection:				
Merit	X	X		
Favoritism			X	X

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